Executive Director's Report
June 2018
(covering time period of May 19 – June 15, 2018)

Rethinking Public Libraries in England & Westchester County

The report, Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016-2021, provides an easy to understand framework for how England's public libraries are shifting their priorities and resources to foster deeper community engagement while also strengthening the libraries' sustainability. The paths followed by the public libraries in England seem to parallel those followed by the public libraries in Westchester County.

The vision for public library services in England and the identified seven critical outcomes to the individuals and communities served by the libraries are inspirational yet practical in guiding the transformational effort and are noted below. The strategic question of how the vision and the seven outcomes will be implemented is answered by identifying several activities that require ongoing attention and development.

The vision for public library services has been achieved when everyone:

- Chooses to use libraries, because they see clear benefits and positive outcomes from doing so
- Understands what library services offer, and how they can make the most of what's available to them
- Is introduced to new ideas and opportunities, then given confidence and quick and easy access to tools, skills and information they need to improve their quality of life
- Receives trusted guidance through the evolving information landscape and builds the skills needed to thrive in a changing world.

In order to achieve this vision, public library services will contribute to seven outcomes that are critical to individuals and communities in their service area:

- Cultural and creative enrichment
- Increased reading and literacy
- Improved digital access and literacy
- Helping everyone achieve their full potential
- Healthier and happier lives
- Greater prosperity
- Stronger, more resilient communities.

The activities to be used to bring about the vision and the outcomes are similar to ones discussed by WLS and member library boards as noted in [brackets]:

- Plan public library services to meet local needs [a public library's long range plan]
- Consider different funding models [explore redistricting, merging of libraries]
- Fund library services in varied and sustainable ways [build a strong partnership with the Friends/Foundation]
- Define what excellent library service looks like [showcase and share best practices, lessons learned]
- Help libraries use better evidence to support decision-making [centralized data collection and analysis, Project Outcome]
- Strengthen coordination and partnerships [with nonprofits, schools, local governments, businesses]
- Develop the library workforce for now and for the future [ongoing staff development and training, expand diversity]
- Make the case for libraries [raise awareness of services and benefits offered by libraries, refresh the image of public libraries].

WLS's three strategic initiatives capture many of the elements listed in the vision, outcomes and activities identified in the study of England's public library services. The three WLS strategic initiatives are:

- Expand WLS's competency as an incubator of library solutions/services and leverage this capability for member libraries
- Build and enable an environment that encourages sharing of best of breed solutions and processes across member libraries
- Support professional development for staff and library trustees at all levels.

Further discussion about WLS's strategic initiatives is scheduled to occur during the June 26th board meeting.

New Study on the Digital Divide

A National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) study released earlier this month indicated that the digital divide is shrinking as more Americans are getting connected to the Internet. The data showed that 78% of Americans ages 3 and older used the Internet as of November 2017. This 3% increase from the July 2015 survey that showed a usage rate of 75% represents an additional 13.5 million Internet users nationwide. The current study noted that the increase was driven largely by a growth in Internet adoption by low-income families, African Americans, Hispanics, and other groups that have been less likely to go online. In this study, it was also determined that more households now had a mobile plan than wired broadband service, tablets were more popular than desktop computers, and there was a substantial increase in the number of individuals who reported using multiple types of devices.

When using family income as a filter for viewing Internet connectivity, the most dramatic change between the July 2015 and November 2017 study data occurred in the families that earned less than $25,000. In 2017 these families reported a connectivity rate of 62.4%, up from 56.6% in July 2015. This rate is still well below the 86.3% connectivity rate reported by families with an income of $100,000 or more in the 2017 study.

Other notable differences shown below reflect Internet use by race or ethnicity as well as the types of devised used to connect to the Internet. As new technologies continue to emerge, adoption of Smartphone, Smart TV/Box, Tablet and Wearable devices grew while Laptop adoption remained flat and Desktop devices declined.

Use by Ethnicity	July 2015	November 2017	Use by Device	July 2015	November 2017
Other, non-Hispanic	78.2%	81.6%	Smartphone	53%	64%
White, non-Hispanic	78.0%	80.2%	Laptop	46%	46%
Asian American	77.4%	79.4%	Smart TV/Box	27%	34%
African American	67.8%	73.4%	Tablet	29%	32%
Hispanic	65.8%	72.1%	Desktop	34%	30%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	70.2%	62.7%	Wearable	1%	8%

The NTIA Data Central site includes the statistics mentioned above as well as additional data. While the data does note an overall increase in digital inclusion, it also highlights that this inclusion does not occur equitably across all communities or individuals. If anything, this latest study reinforces that public libraries and public library systems still have important roles to play in enhancing digital inclusion and digital literacy for all.

NYS Aid for Public Library Construction

Part of the approved FY2018-2019 New York State budget included an increase to State Library Construction Aid to a total of $34 Million. New York State Library Division of Library Development (DLD) informed WLS that the System's total allocation for the 2018-2021 program cycle is $1,590,468. The allocation is formula driven based on a System's service area population and represents an increase of 42% over the FY2017-2018 allocation of $1,122,684.

Award notifications for last year's cycle (2017-2020) have not yet been sent. The applications that were approved by the WLS Board in September and submitted to Albany in October 2017 have been reviewed by DLD; but the review by the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY) has not yet been finalized. Once that is complete, the award notifications will be sent—hopefully by the end of June. In the meantime, the online portal for the current 2018-2021 cycle is now open and instructions are available via the State Library's construction webpage. Elise Burke has also scheduled workshops regarding the Construction Aid program and application process for the week of July 23rd, and registration is available via the WLS Evanced calendar.
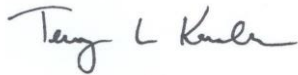
Trustee Institutes 2018

The last WLS Trustee Institute, *Budget with a Mission*, held on Tuesday, June 5th, at the Somers Library was very engaging. Robert Cordero and Susan Barossi, Partners at PKF O'Connor Davies, led the conversation; and much information was shared regarding strategic planning, meaningful financial reporting, board interaction and involvement, and successful budgeting tips. The presentation slides and other information from the event will be posted to the WLS website and shared shortly. We thank the Somers Library for hosting this event!

Future Events

June 21-26	American Library Association (ALA) Annual Conference – New Orleans, LA
September 6	WLS Trustee Institute: *Getting to the Next Stage of Community Support— Getting the Most out of Advocacy and Fund Raising* with Libby Post, President, Communication Services – WLS Headquarters, Elmsford
October 4	WLS Trustee Institute: *Roles & Responsibilities of Library Trustees* with Lauren Moore, Executive Director of the Pioneer Library System – Mount Kisco Public Library
October 20	5th Annual WLS Battle of the Books – Hendrick Hudson High School
November 7-10	New York Library Association (NYLA) Annual Conference – Rochester, NY

Respectfully submitted,

Terry L. Kirchner
Executive Director

LIST OF VISITS AND MEETINGS ATTENDED
May 21 – June 15, 2018

MAY

21	Elise Burke, Executive Assistant
	The LOFT & TD Bank Kick Off to Pride Event, White Plains
22	Sean Ryan, WLS President; Rob Caluori, Director of Information Technology (IT)
	Rob Caluori, Director of Information Technology (IT)
	United Way of Westchester & Putnam
23	Nonprofit Westchester (NPW) Board Meeting
	Pat Brigham, Director of Development
	Hui Sheng, Manager, eContent & Resource Sharing
	HVAC
	Webinar: *Recorded Books Presents – The Great Courses Library Collection*
24	Today's Students / Tomorrow's Teachers Greater Hudson Valley Region 2018 Recognition Brunch, Tarrytown
29	211 Policy Working Group & Video Brainstorm, White Plains
	Rob Caluori, Director of IT
	Westchester Community Foundation (WCF) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Leadership Session
	WLS Board
30	Great American Read, Eastchester Public Library
	Pat Brigham, Director of Development
	Jeremy Johannesen, Director, New York Library Association (NYLA)

JUNE

2-6	International Public Library Fundraising Conference – Denver, CO
7	Great American Read Conference Call
	Douglas Wray, Manager, Cataloging Services
8	Elena Falcone, Director of Public Innovation & Engagement (PIE) re Parole/Probation/Re-entry
11	Patricia Perito, Director of the Town of Pelham Public Library
	Elise Burke, Executive Assistant
12	Rob Caluori, Director of IT
	Public Library System Directors (PULISDO) and NYS Library Division of Library Development Conference Call
13	Volunteer NY Networking Breakfast, Elmsford, NY
	Pat Brigham, Director of Development
14	Sean Ryan, WLS President; Fran Feuerman, WLS CFO; Rob Caluori, Director of IT
	Jeff Rosedale, Director, Manhattanville College Library
	Westchester County Association (WCA) Board Meeting, Rye
15	WCF CEO Leadership Session